

Appl. No. 10/910,071
Amdt. Dated: April 10, 2007
Reply to Office Action of February 02, 2007

~~the number of shelves being unitary portions of the resin body; and~~
~~a metal rod being received in said first through hole of said body~~
~~portion;~~

wherein said body portion is molded from an electrically conductive resin molding material.

Claims 3-4 (cancelled).

Claim 5 (previously presented): The substrate-supporting rod as claimed in claim 1, wherein said projection comprises a highest portion having a smooth curved surface.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The substrate-supporting rod according to claim 1, wherein each of the shelves extends perpendicularly to [[an]] the central axis of the body portion.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The substrate-supporting rod according to claim 1, wherein each of the shelves is upward inclined relative to [[an]] the central axis of the body portion.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The substrate-supporting rod according to claim 1, wherein the cross section of said body portion is C-shaped.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The substrate-supporting rod according to claim 1, wherein the cross section of said body portion is O-shaped.

Claim 10 (previously presented): The substrate-supporting rod according to claim 1, wherein the metal rod comprises a pair of end portions each of which having a pair of side faces parallel to each other and a threaded hole.

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Claim 11 (currently amended): A cassette configured for supporting a substrate, comprising:

at least two pairs of supporting rods, each rod comprising:

a resin body which comprises a cylindrical body portion having an axial first through hole and a number of shelves, the number of shelves arising from said body portion and extending in parallel to one another at a predetermined pitch, said body portion and the number of shelves being unitary portions of the resin body; and

a metal rod being received in said first through hole of the body portion;

wherein each of the shelves is provided with a projection extending ~~at from~~ a free end thereof, said projection is cylindrical in shape of which the diameter is larger than the thickness of the shelf, and a central axis of said projection is substantially perpendicular to ~~[[an]]~~ a central axis of the body portion; and

a pair of frames cooperating with the supporting rods in the overall shape of a box for accommodating a substrate between the shelves of each opposed pair of supporting rods.

Claim 12 (original): The cassette as claimed in claim 11, wherein said body portion is molded from an electrically conductive resin molding material.

Claims 13-14 (cancelled).

Claim 15 (previously presented): The cassette according to claim 11, wherein said projection comprises a highest portion having a smooth curved surface.

Claim 16 (currently amended): The cassette according to claim 11,

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wherein each of the shelves extends perpendicularly to ~~[[an]]~~ the central axis of the body portion.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The cassette according to claim 11, wherein each of the shelves is upward inclined relative to ~~[[an]]~~ the central axis of the body portion.

Claim 18 (original): The cassette as claimed in claim 11, wherein the cross section of said body portion is C-shaped.

Claim 19 (original): The cassette as claimed in claim 11, wherein the cross section of said body portion is O-shaped.

Claim 20 (original): The cassette as claimed in claim 11, wherein the metal rod comprises a pair of end portions each of which having a pair of side faces parallel to each other and a threaded hole.

Claim 21 (original): The cassette as claimed in claim 11, wherein each of the frames is provided with several grooves, each of which matches with the end portion of the metal rod.

Claim 22 (previously presented): The cassette as claimed in claim 21, wherein each of the grooves is provided with a second through hole secured with the threaded hole of the end portion of the metal rod.

Claim 23 (cancelled).

Claim 24 (previously presented): The substrate-supporting rod according to claim 2, wherein the cross section of said body portion is C-shaped.

Claim 25 (cancelled).

Claim 26 (currently amended): The substrate-supporting rod as

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claimed in claim 24 [[25]], wherein said projection comprises a highest portion having a smooth curved surface.

Claim 27 (currently amended): The substrate-supporting rod according to claim 24, wherein each of the shelves extends perpendicularly to [[an]] the central axis of the body portion.

Claim 28 (currently amended): The substrate-supporting rod according to claim 24, wherein each of the shelves is upward inclined relative to [[an]] the central axis of the body portion.

Claim 29 (new): A substrate-supporting rod to be assembled with a cassette frame for supporting substrates, the substrate-supporting rod comprising:

a resin body which comprises a cylindrical body portion having an axial first through hole and a number of shelves, the number of shelves arising from said body portion and extending away from said body portion in parallel to one another at a predetermined pitch, said body portion and the number of shelves being unitary portions of the resin body; and

a metal rod being received in said first through hole of said body portion;

wherein each of the shelves is provided with a projection extending along a widthwise direction and at a free end thereof, said projection is cylindrical in shape of which the diameter is larger than the thickness of the shelf.